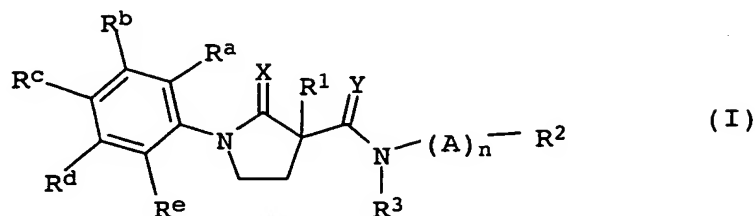


We claim:

1. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide of the formula I

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where the variables R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , X , Y , A , n , R^a , R^b , R^c , R^d and R^e are as defined below:

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R^1 is hydrogen, OH, Cl, Br, C_1 - C_6 -alkyl, C_3 - C_6 -cycloalkyl, C_3 - C_6 -alkenyl, C_3 - C_6 -alkynyl, $C(O)R^4$ or $OC(O)R^4$;

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R^2 and R^3 independently of one another are hydrogen, C_1 - C_{10} -alkyl, C_3 - C_{10} -cycloalkyl, C_7 - C_{10} -polycycloalkyl, C_3 - C_8 -alkenyl, C_3 - C_{10} -alkynyl, C_5 - C_{10} -cycloalkenyl, C_3 - C_8 -cycloalkyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl, phenyl or 3- to 7-membered heterocyclyl, where the 9 last-mentioned groups may be unsubstituted, partially or fully halogenated and/or contain 1, 2 or 3 radicals selected from the group consisting of OH, CN, NO_2 , COOH, C_1 - C_6 -alkyl, C_1 - C_6 -haloalkyl, C_1 - C_6 -alkoxy, C_1 - C_4 -haloalkoxy, C_2 - C_6 -alkenyl, C_2 - C_6 -alkynyl, C_1 - C_6 -alkylthio, C_1 - C_4 -haloalkylthio, unsubstituted or substituted phenyl, $COOR^5$, NR^6R^7 , $C(O)NR^8SO_2R^{13}$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$ and 3- to 7-membered heterocyclyl, and each heterocyclyl may contain 1, 2 or 3 heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur, a group NR^{10} and a group SO_2 , and, if appropriate, 1, 2 or 3 carbonyl groups and/or thiocarbonyl groups as ring members; and/or may contain a ring-fused phenyl ring which is unsubstituted or substituted; or

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R^2 and R^3 with the group $N-(A)_n$ to which they are attached form a saturated 3- to 7-membered heterocycle which, in addition to the nitrogen atom, may contain 1, 2 or a further 3 heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur and a group NR^{10} and, if appropriate, 1, 2 or 3 carbonyl groups and/or thiocarbonyl groups as ring members;

5 R^a , R^b , R^c , R^d and R^e independently of one another are hydrogen, OH, CN, NO_2 , halogen, C_1 - C_{10} -alkyl, C_3 - C_6 -cycloalkyl, C_2 - C_6 -alkenyl, C_2 - C_6 -alkynyl, C_1 - C_6 -haloalkyl, C_2 - C_6 -haloalkenyl, C_1 - C_6 -alkoxy, C_1 - C_4 -haloalkoxy, C_1 - C_6 -alkylthio, C_1 - C_4 -haloalkylthio, $C(O)R^4$, $COOR^5$, NR^6R^7 , $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $S(O)_2NR^8R^9$, $S(O)R^{11}$, $S(O)_2R^{11}$ or C_1 - C_4 -alkoxy- C_1 - C_6 -alkyl; or

10 two adjacent radicals R^a to R^e together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which may contain one or two heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, oxygen, sulfur and a group NR^{10} as ring-forming atom and/or may carry one, two, three or four radicals selected from the group
15 consisting of halogen and C_1 - C_4 -alkyl;

X , Y independently of one another are oxygen or sulfur;

20 n is 0 or 1;

A is 0, $S(O)_k$ or NR^{12} , where k is 0, 1 or 2;

R^4 , R^8 , R^9 independently of one another are hydrogen or C_1 - C_4 -alkyl;

25 R^5 , R^{11} are C_1 - C_4 -alkyl;

R^6 , R^7 independently of one another are hydrogen, C_1 - C_6 -alkyl, C_3 - C_6 -alkenyl, C_3 - C_6 -alkynyl, $C(O)R^4$, $COOR^5$ or $S(O)_2R^{11}$;

30 R^{10} , R^{12} independently of one another are hydrogen, C_1 - C_6 -alkyl, C_3 - C_6 -alkenyl or C_3 - C_6 -alkynyl; and

35 R^{13} is phenyl which is unsubstituted or carries 1, 2, 3 or 4 substituents, where the substituents are selected from the group consisting of halogen, nitro, cyano, OH, alkyl, alkoxy, haloalkyl, haloalkoxy, $COOR^5$, NR^6R^7 and $C(O)NR^8R^9$;

or an agriculturally useful salt of I.

40 2. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in claim 1 in which

45 R^2 and R^3 independently of one another are hydrogen, C_1 - C_{10} -alkyl, C_3 - C_{10} -cycloalkyl, C_3 - C_8 -alkenyl, C_3 - C_8 -alkynyl, C_5 - C_{10} -cycloalkenyl, C_3 - C_8 -cycloalkyl- C_1 - C_4 -alkyl, phenyl or 3- to 7-membered heterocyclyl, where the 8 last-mentioned groups may be unsubstituted, partially or fully halogenated and/or

- contain 1, 2 or 3 radicals selected from the group consisting of OH, CN, NO₂, COOH, C₁-C₆-alkyl, C₁-C₆-haloalkyl, C₁-C₆-alkoxy, C₁-C₄-haloalkoxy, C₂-C₆-alkenyl, C₂-C₆-alkynyl, C₁-C₆-alkylthio, C₁-C₄-haloalkylthio, unsubstituted or substituted phenyl, COOR⁵, NR⁶R⁷, C(O)NR⁸R⁹, and heterocyclyl may contain 1, 2 or 3 heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur and a group NR¹⁰ and, if appropriate, 1, 2 or 3 carbonyl groups and/or thiocarbonyl groups as ring members;
- R² and R³ with the group N-(A)_n to which they are attached form a saturated 3- to 7-membered heterocycle which, in addition to the nitrogen atom, may contain 1, 2 or a further 3 heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur and a group NR¹⁰ and, if appropriate, 1, 2 or 3 carbonyl groups and/or thiocarbonyl groups as ring members.
3. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in claim 1 or 2 where R¹ is hydrogen.
 4. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where R³ is hydrogen or C₁-C₄-alkyl.
 5. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where R² is C₁-C₆-alkyl, C₃-C₆-cycloalkyl, C₃-C₆-alkenyl, C₃-C₆-alkynyl, C₅-C₆-cycloalkenyl, phenyl C₃-C₆-cycloalkyl-C₁-C₄-alkyl, where C₁-C₆-alkyl may be partially or fully halogenated and/or may contain a radical selected from the group consisting of C₁-C₆-alkoxy, C₁-C₄-haloalkoxy, C₁-C₆-alkylthio, C₁-C₄-haloalkylthio, unsubstituted or substituted phenyl, COOR⁵, NR⁶R⁷ and C(O)NR⁸R⁹.
 6. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where X and Y represent oxygen.
 7. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where n = 0.
 8. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where the radicals R^a, R^b, R^c, R^d and R^e are selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halogen, CN, C₁-C₄-alkyl, OCH₃, CF₃, CHF₂, OCF₃ and OCHF₂.

9. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where not more than 3 of the radicals R^a , R^b , R^c , R^d and R^e are different from hydrogen.
- 5 10. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in any of the preceding claims where 2 or 3 of the radicals R^a , R^b , R^c , R^d and R^e are different from hydrogen.
- 10 11. A 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide as claimed in claim 9 or 10 where the radicals R^a and R^e represent hydrogen.
- 15 12. A composition, comprising a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt of I as claimed in any of the preceding claims and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.
- 20 13. A method for controlling unwanted vegetation, which comprises allowing a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 1-phenylpyrrolidin-2-one-3-carboxamide of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt of I as claimed in any of the preceding claims to act on plants, their habitat or on seed.

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